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"LÜBKE RELIABLE" - GESTAPO

"Lübke is reliable" stated a Gestapo report in September 1940; an extract from the report is reproduced below. It deals with establishment of a "special Gestapo labour camp" for the detention of conscripted workers who had made difficulties at Peenemünde, where the nazis were rushing the construction of the special weapon research centre which later produced Hitler's secret weapons, the V 1 and V 2 rockets.

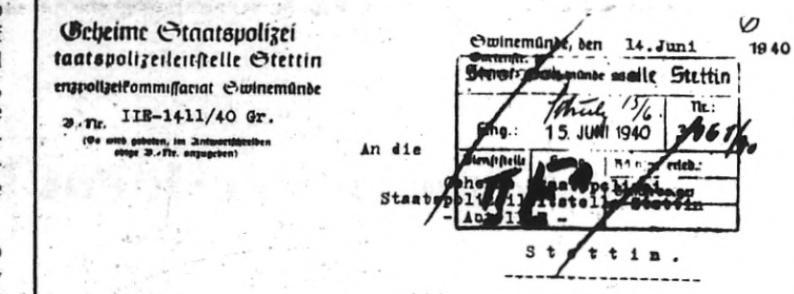
The "reliable Lübke" referred to is Heinrich Lübke, who, on July 1st 1964, was re-elected President of the West German Federal Republic. At the time of the exchange of letters between different Gestapo branches in 1940, Heinrich Lübke was boss of the Schlempp Building Company, which had been given the task of building the weapon research centre.

These documents, showing that Lübke cooperated fully with the Gestapo, the nazi secret police, in the erection of a private concentration camp on the building site, were discovered a few weeks ago in the Gestapo archives; they were made public at an international press conference in East Berlin on June 29th, two days before Lübke stood for re-election.

The original Gestapo file, dealing with various difficulties encountered in handling the conscripted German workers and Polish slave workers at Peenemünde, was made available for public inspection in East Berlin.

Many of the letters and reports in the file are of no particular interest, dealing as they do simply with shortcomings and bureaucratic difficulties at the building site; but then comes a letter addressed on June 14th 1940 to the Gestapo centre in Stettin by

THE LÜBKE DOCUMENTS



Geheime Staatspolizei
taatspolizeileitstelle Stettin
enzpolizeikommissariat Swinemünde
D.-Nr. IIE-1411/40 Gr.

Swinemünde, den 14. Juni 1940

An die
Staatspolizeistelle Stettin
Stettin.

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Gelegentlich einer Dienstreise meines Beauftragten, Assessor H o h m a n n, nach Peenemünde wurde festgestellt, daß in dem dortigen Marinebauvorhaben bei den einzelnen Baufirmen erhebliche Fälle von Arbeitsverweigerung vorkommen. Assessor Hohmann hat auf Grund der ihm vorgetragenen Fälle versprochen, baldige Abhilfe zu schaffen, und zwar durch Einrichtung eines Sonderlagers der Geheimen Staatspolizei ähnlich wie die in Torgelow und Ueckermünde. Ich bitte daher,

***

mit den zuständigen Behörden unterrichtet, und in Kenntnis gesetzt, dass in der weiteren Bearbeitung des Vorgangs besonders auf die Herren M ah s und L ü b k e zurückgegriffen werden kann. Beide haben sich als vertrauenswürdig erwiesen.

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Photostat 1. The letter-head of one of the reports from the newly-discovered Gestapo file.

Photostat 2: Extract from a letter of the Reich Commissioner of Labour for Pomerania to the Stettin Gestapo, June 14th 1940:

"On the occasion of a business trip of my official, Assessor Hohmann, to Peenemünde it was ascertained that there have been many cases of refusal to work in the various building firms at the marine construction project there. In view of the cases submitted to him, Assessor Hohmann has promised to take immediate steps in the form of the establishment of a special camp of the Secret State Police (Gestapo, ed.) similar to those at Torgelow and Ueckermünde."

Photostat 3: Extract from report of the Stettin Gestapo, September 24th 1940:

"... the competent authorities have been informed that in further treatment of the matter, particular reference can be made to Herr Mahs and Herr Lübke. Both have proved themselves reliable."

the "Reich Commissioner of Labour" for Pomerania. This letter states:

"...There are many cases of refusal to work at Peenemünde. In view of the cases submitted to him Assessor Hohmann has promised to take immediate steps, in the form of the establishment of a special camp of the Secret State Police (Gestapo, ed.) similar to those at Torgelow and Ueckermünde."

Five days later, on June 19th, the Stettin Gestapo reported that two Gestapo officers had been rushed to Peenemünde. They reported:

"We discussed the following points with Architect Mahs of the Schlempp Building Company (Lübke's firm, ed.): The construction of a special camp is quite possible. Preliminary work for this will be done by the Schlempp Building Company: it will be completed in about fourteen days. The guarding of the workers detained in the camp will be undertaken by persons who should best be selected by Stettin Gestapo."

The report then stated that a works meeting should be called to explain this step and added: "Preparations for this will be made by Herr Mahs and Herr Lübke of the Schlempp Building Company."

Everything seems to have gone smoothly under Lübke's supervision. On September 24th 1940 the Gestapo file closes with the entry:

"In further treatment of the matter, particular reference can be made to Herr Mahs and Herr Lübke. Both have proved themselves reliable."

No further details have yet been discovered as to how many persons were confined in President Lübke's private concentration camp, or what happened to them. The Gestapo file shows that at the time of the establishment of the camp 450 Polish slave workers were employed by Lübke, together with several thousand conscripted German workers. Later in the war, many thousands of slave workers from all parts of Europe were employed on Lübke's building site. A memorial stone erected after the war at Peenemünde records the last resting place of 91 Poles, 23 Ukrainians, 17 Frenchmen, and 82 other slaves of unknown nationality.

And Lübke is today President of West Germany, and his accomplice Erwin Mahs is Federal Building Director in the West German Ministry of Housing.

West German President Re-Elected

Heinrich Lübke, 70, was re-elected President of West Germany on July 1st. He will hold this office until 1969. Lübke was re-elected with the support of the governing Christian Democrats, and the nominally oppositional Social Democrats; the only counter-candidate, Ewald Bucher, Free Democrat, received 123 votes against the 710 given for Lübke.

A large proportion of the Social Democratic electors at the "Federal Assembly", composed of the Federal Parliament and representatives of the various West German provinces, ignored their party instructions to support Lübke, and turned in blank papers. A total of 187 electors abstained; most of them were believed to be Social Democrats.

Before the presidential election was held, the Governments of the German Democratic Republic and the Soviet Union protested sharply at the staging of this election in West Berlin, which lies outside the territory of the West German Federal Republic.

The protest note of the GDR, addressed to Britain, the USA and France, on June 24th stated:

"West Berlin has been chosen as the site of the presidential election although this area does not form part of the West German Federal Republic either legally or geographically. The governments of the USA, Britain and France have repeatedly recognised this fact.

"The election of the West German Federal President in West Berlin, 200 kilometres outside the frontiers of the Federal Republic, is a demonstration of the aggressive policy of revenge of West German militarism, which the United States (and the other western powers) pledged themselves to extirpate in the agreements concluded by the anti-Hitler coalition.

"Such revanchist acts of provocation create tension in the heart of Europe, and run contrary to the first successes of international detente.

"The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the German Democratic Republic requests the Government of the United States (and the other western powers) which still exercises occupational functions in West Berlin, and is therefore responsible for seeing to it that West Berlin is not misused for aggressive policies against other states, not to permit any measures which must seriously damage international detente."

The protest note of the Soviet Union, after stressing the fact that the western powers themselves had recognised that West Berlin was not part of the West German Federal Republic, continued:

"Since the authorities of the United States (and the other western powers) are ready in this case to follow the lead given by the West German authorities, they are naturally making themselves responsible for any unwelcome results which may ensue."

Top Medal for War Criminal

First official act of newly-elected West German President Lübke was to award convicted war criminal Fritz ter Meer the "Grand Cross of the Federal Republic" for meritorious services.

Fritz ter Meer was a director of the chemicals firm IG Farben during the nazi period, and was personally concerned in the production of poison gas for use in the nazi extermination use in the nazi extermination camps. camps. On July 30th 1948 a Us military court sentenced him to seven years imprisonment for war crimes. In his trial testimony, Herr ter Meer claimed that no harm had been done to slave labourers worked to death in IG Farben factories "since they would have been killed anyway".

In March this year another IG Farben director was involved in a "medal scandal". Lübke awarded Heinrich Bütefisch the Federal Grand Cross, but fourteen days later had to ask him to hand it back after newspapers pointed out that Bütefisch had been sentenced to six years imprisonment for war crimes. The West German authorities claimed that the award had been a mistake; they had not been aware of the war crimes sentence.

In the case of the new award to Fritz ter Meer, no such excuse is possible; for weeks before President Lübke awarded him the medal responsible West German newspapers had been pointing out that Herr ter Meer had a criminal record.

NEW SCHOOLS FOR NEW TIMES (2)

By Joan Becker

The draft of the new Education Law of the GDR published in May marks the third stage in educational advance since 1945; it suggests expansions, improvements and some modifications of the law in force since 1959. But it also leaves a multitude of problems open for discussion, many of which will be thrashed out by teachers, education experts and parents this year before the law is passed. Other problems will undoubtedly remain to be solved in the course of practical experience.

"As a result of the scientific and technical revolution going on in socialist society, the meaning of the term general education is undergoing a basic change in our times", the draft states.

It suggests the following as essential components of modern general education: general knowledge of mathematics, with an early start in algebra and geometry, natural sciences (chemistry, physics and biology), technology and economics, basic polytechnical training, elementary social science from a Marxist point of view, thorough knowledge of German and some knowledge of one or two foreign languages (Russian for all and — generally speaking — English, with emphasis on the spoken language), art and music, physical training and hygiene.

Within the framework of a unitary system of education it includes pre-school educational institutions, ten-year polytechnical high school for all (henceforth to be called simply "high school"), the two additional years leading up to "Abitur" (about the equivalent of the British GCE A level), specialised schools (schools stressing one special subject. eg. chemistry, a foreign language, music etc.), schools for physically and mentally handicapped children, vocational training schools with or without "Abitur" courses, and other institutions leading up to university standard.

The idea is to have no dead ends; **any** child with sufficient ability should have the prospect of reaching university standard through one of these channels.

The over-all aim in the past was to raise the general standard of education — in the first stage to eight years' primary education and in the second stage to ten years' primary and secondary education with basic polytechnical training for all. In the third stage outlined in the new draft, more attention is to be directed towards a certain degree of specialisation at an earlier age than hitherto, generally speaking during the last four years of ten-year high school, but in some cases even earlier. This should provide the over-all higher quality required in specific fields.

Defining the aims of each succeeding stage in the educational process, the draft puts forward suggestions as to what should be aimed at in pre-school institutions, incorporating ideas arising from recent research into what constitutes "Schulreife" — the physical and mental state a child should have reached before starting school at six — and suggests some far-reaching alterations in high school age-groups.

Since about 50 per cent of all three to six year-olds in the GDR now attend kindergarten and the ultimate aim is to have the vast majority attending, a much larger proportion of small children are now learning to live in a community, to do small jobs and acquire simple skills and general knowledge before they start school. The draft therefore suggests that only three years (instead of the present four) should be devoted to primary school proper and that children of about nine could cope with special subjects, including one foreign language and simple polytechnical training; in this middle age-group (9 to 11 year-olds), a beginning could also be made in directing children's interests towards much-needed vocations, sorting out special talents and so on. Ten year-olds could also start a second foreign language.

The draft also suggests working out a simple civics course for 10 year-olds which would provide a foundation for regular civics and history lessons starting the following year. It leaves open for further discussion and research the order in which the natural sciences should be introduced and how they should be co-ordinated.

The 12 to 16 year-olds would then be in the senior school age-group, in which the entire system centres round general education combined with basic vocational training. The draft points out that at this stage polytechnical education has two functions: it must provide children with basic technical and economic-political knowledge of socialist production and it must point the way to the future, since these are the years during which children will have to start making up their minds about what they mean to do in life. The 15 and 16 year-olds must receive a basic vocational training useful in many kinds of work, and some general technical instruction. Ten-year high school ends with an examination in both general education and basic vocational training. Another problem left open for discussion here is whether teaching in some subjects (eg. biology, geography) might not be completed before the age of 16, so as to allow more scope for some kind of specialisation in the final year or two.

These changes in the age groups would, of course, be introduced step by step; the change-over to 3-year primary school would not simply be the present four years' work compressed into three years. The revised time-tables would conceivably be finished by 1968 and the first children to go right through the new type of school envisaged would be finished about 1980.

W. German View

"The increase in the number of high school children taking 'Abitur' in the Federal Republic will increase only 4 per cent between 1959 and 1970; the increase planned in France is 154 per cent, in Norway 165 per cent, in Italy 110 per cent — not to mention the increases planned in the eastern bloc countries."

"The average age for taking the 'Abitur' examination (in West Germany) is now 20 or 21 for young men — they can hardly be called boys any longer."

*

"There is such a gulf between the subject matter dealt with in the higher schools and the modest offerings of the primary schools that 'a second path to higher education' is practically non-existent. If at least the fundamentals of a foreign language were taught in the primary schools, the difference between the three-quarters of so-called uneducated and the quarter of so-called educated would not be so crass and there would be some chance of finding 'a second path to higher education'."

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(Brigitte Gerstenmaier, wife of the Chairman of the West German Federal Parliament, in "Die Welt", Hamburg, June 20th 1964)

The worst organisational headaches, both for schools and training enterprises, are connected with the basic vocational training for 15 and 16 year-olds; this must of necessity vary in different schools, since it is given in factories or on farms and not in school. There is bound, therefore, to be some differentiation in emphasis in general education because of the varying requirements in vocational training in different industries. Up to now, in what may be called the experimental stage, the aim has been to devote one day a week and two periods of two to three weeks a year to polytechnical training. In practice, however, it has often proved difficult for the enterprises to work out satisfactory time-tables on this basis. Suggestions have been made that children would gain more from two consecutive days a week, or one consecutive week a month, of training, which would also be easier for enterprises to organise. This would obviously mean a complete revolution in school time-tables. As the draft points out, many practical experiments will have to be made to find the best solution to these problems. At all events, every effort must be made to avoid any increase in total school hours, since it is considered that the maximum with which the majority of children can cope has now been reached.

The draft stresses that more information must be imparted, not by increasing the teaching hours but by making better use of teaching aids such as laboratories, audo-visual cabinets, mechanical, electrical and electronic testing apparatus, television, radio and film. Teaching machines and programmed textbooks are to be developed and tried out. Some interesting experiments have already been made in this field, although many teachers do not feel entirely happy about results so far achieved; individual programmes for individual pupils should enable each to proceed at the speed of which he is capable, and should give teachers more time to help both advanced and backward pupils individually; but there may also be a danger of teachers losing the necessary contact with their classes as a whole.

More efforts are also to be made to cut out waste time during lessons by avoiding unnecessary standing up, visits to the blackboard, repetitions and so on, and by planning all experimental work carefully beforehand.

The new age-grouping referred to above would get rid of a remaining dead end — the change-over to 12-year high school at 14. At present the education provided in the last two years of ten-year high school is not indentical with that provided in the first two years of the existing extended high school (14 to 18), so that there is no possibility to switch from the one to the other. When the new grouping is introduced, the decision to remain at school and take the "Abitur" examination, or to go to a vocational training school with or without "Abitur" courses, will depend upon success in the final examinations at ten-year high school (about the equivalent of the British GCE — O level). This change would obviate the danger of passing over so-called "late developers" and would also remove the last remaining obstacle to equal educational opportunity for all. There are no earlier tests (such as the British 11-plus) for channelling children into varying types of schools. The number of children leaving school at 14 will remain very small.

Touching upon changes in emphasis in the education offered in the smaller proportion of schools taking pupils up to "Abitur", the draft suggests that, in view of the improved ten-year polytechnical education now available, and of the changing requirements in higher education, there should be a departure from the present three types — arts, science and classics — which at present exist in the proportions of about 1:4:1, to a differentiation depending upon related groups of technical subjects. (This change has in fact been developing "on the quiet" for some time; there may be a tendency to neglect the arts because of the very urgent need for qualified technical personnel).

It appears probable that there will be less teaching of the classics; the draft expressly recommends more modern language teaching at an earlier age in most schools, but how this is to be achieved remains somewhat obscure, in view of the very full school time-tables and the shortage of qualified language teachers. More detailed plans for the two final school years will be published shortly by the Ministry of Education. The form which vocational training for 17 and 18 year-olds should take is also left open for further discussion.

Whatever the final outcome, however, the long-term aim is to have more, not fewer children remaining at school for twelve years.

Referring to the specialised schools teaching up to university standard, the draft suggests that they might start stressing a special subject (language, chemistry, physics, mathematics, music, art) with twelve year-olds, or in some cases much earlier. The possibility mooted of having a specialised classical language school or schools would obviate one danger of "throwing the baby out with the bath".

Whatever age is decided upon as suitable for a start in specialised teaching, much greater efforts should be made to hunt out and encourage special talents at an early age, the draft states. The number of these schools would in any case remain small (not enough to give rise to anything approaching a re-introduction of discrimination), and since all of them will be expected to maintain much the same over-all standard of general polytechnical education as the normal high schools, there will hardly be time for very extensive specialisation.

The draft also urges a speed-up in another long-term aim — all-day school (an innovation in Germany), but it will be some time before such schools predominate, because of the continued shortage of teachers and other trained personnel.

(The specific problems of vocational training, with which the draft deals in detail, will be the subject of a further article.)

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GDR SHIPBUILDING

Sixth Largest in World

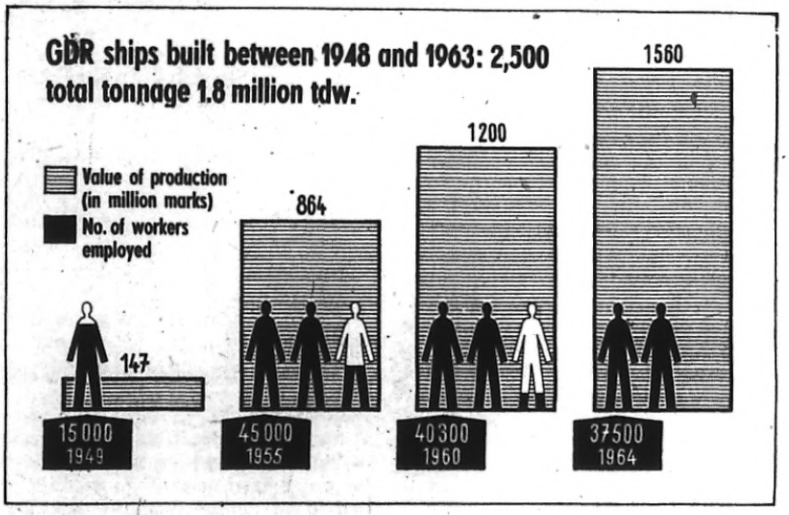
Shipbuilding is an entirely new industry in the German Democratic Republic, an industry only 15 years old. In pre-war days the small shipyards on that part of the Baltic coast now belonging to the GDR turned out only a few small coastal vessels; German shipbuilding had always centred round Hamburg in West Germany.

Starting in 1948, these small shipyards — Wismar, Warnemuende, Wolgast, Rostock and Stralsund — were expanded and modernised beyond recognition.

The value of production increased steadily from 147 million marks in 1948 to 1,560 million marks in 1963, i. e., more than ten-fold. 2,500 ships with a total tonnage of 1.8 million tdw were built, and the GDR is now building passenger liners up to 19,000 tons for 750 passengers, motor passenger ships up to 12,000 tons and over 8,000 HP, fishing and fish-processing and refrigerator fishing ships for the tropics, and various kinds of trawlers and coastal vessels for the GDR merchant and fishing fleets and for export.

Today the GDR, after a late start, ranks sixth in the world in the shipbuilding industry — after Japan, the USSR, England, the USA and West Germany.

The GDR National Shipping Company founded in 1952 started with one old ship built in 1903; it now has 90 ships of various types and sizes, most of them built in GDR shipyards, running regular services to 82 countries.



Ships built in the GDR are exported to the Soviet Union, Poland, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland and West Germany.

In the early years, output at any cost was the main aim, while less attention was paid to costs and methods of production. Speaking to workers at the Stralsund shipyards in summer 1963, GDR State Chairman Walter Ulbricht reminded them that production costs were still about 20 % higher than the international average and that more attention would now have to be paid to building ships which could be sold at competitive prices on the world market.

Tremendous efforts have since been made to cut down production costs through rationalisation, more mechanisation and automation, production of bigger series of the newest types of ships, long-term planning and so on.

Before working out detailed plans for each shipyard up to 1970, the Association of Shipbuilding Enterprises made a thorough analysis of the situation in the international shipbuilding industry and of the market for various kinds of ships. This work was considerably speeded up by the use of electronic calculators. Additional improvements were made in co-operation with firms delivering ship's parts — specifications became more exact, delivery dates were better co-ordinated, prices more accurately fixed etc.

Expenditure on research and development was increased to double that of 1962, so that by 1965 improved types of ships can replace old models. A much larger staff of engineering constructors and ship's designers can now prepare drafts in about two-thirds of the time previously required.

This expenditure, and also a very big increase in bonuses for changes and improvements which have resulted in higher labour productivity, has already justified itself; by the end of April this year the shipyards had made 7 million marks more profit than planned.

These reforms at the top have proved a tremendous encouragement to workers to search for new ways and means to cut down on waste of time and material. The reduction in production costs this year will be even bigger than originally planned.

GDR Shipbuilding Programme 1964

For Export: A 19,000-ton, 21,000 HP motor passenger liner, four 12,300-ton and seven 4,375-ton freighters, two 4,300-ton research ships, one crane-ship, two 4,870-ton, 8,000 PS motor passenger ships, twelve 700-ton motor freighters, two floating excavators, and some ocean tugs for the Soviet Union; ocean tugs for Poland; a 2,000-ton motor freighter for West Germany; cutters for Sweden, Denmark and Iceland.

For Home Use: Four 10,300-ton freighters, two 2,900-ton fishing and fish-processing ships, an Arctic trawler and a refrigerator and transport ship, eleven motor freighters, 52 tug-boats for GDR inland waterways, two harbour tugs and a river steamer for 1,100 passengers.

Agricultural Show

700 agricultural experts from thirty countries saw the Markkleeberg Agricultural Show in the GDR in June. The show covered an area of 350 acres and had 82 pavillions and exhibition halls. Seven foreign countries exhibited: Great Britain, Holland, Denmark, the Soviet Union, Poland, Hungary and Yugoslavia. West Germany also exhibited. This year the show included forestry for the first time.

Exhibits included agricultural machinery, cattle, pigs and sheep, poultry and horses.

This year's is the 12th agricultural show in Markkleeberg; about nine million people visited it in the past eleven years.

PRITTIE'S PSEUDO-HISTORY

A Book Review by John Peet

"Germans Against Hitler", by Terence Prittie. Hutchinson, London, 30 shillings.

The exciting, moving and tragic history of the anti-fascist resistance movement inside Germany has received curiously little attention in the outside world. For the whole twelve years of the nazi era, many tens of thousands of Germans fought against fascism, under the most adverse conditions imaginable, inside Germany, but I know of no book in the English language which gives anything like an adequate account of this struggle and its multitude of victims.

There is plenty of material available; the Gestapo was terribly thorough, and frightfully effective, in breaking up the resistance groups formed by all sections of the population, but there were survivors who have been able to tell their tales. In addition Gestapo files and the archives of the nazi "People's Courts" which were not destroyed give us a lot of information.

In the German Democratic Republic, hundreds of books and pamphlets have been published giving very full documentary details of the resistance fight, particularly of the working class opponents of Hitler; in West Germany too a number of useful works have been published, though most of these concentrate almost entirely on the "respectable" resistance of churchmen, conservatives and officers, which was largely confined to the closing period of the war.

There have been a few books in English on various aspects of the fight put up by Germans who opposed Hitler for various reasons, but almost without exception these books have concentrated upon the activities of right-wing and middle-class resistance groups.

Now at last, the London publishing house of Hutchinson has presented what claims to be an account of the struggle of all the main anti-Hitler trends; this book contains a considerable quantity of information otherwise unavailable in English, but unfortunately it is so superficial and so factually inaccurate that it can scarcely be recommended.

The book "Germans Against Hitler" has been compiled by Terence Prittie, who worked for 17 years as Bonn correspondent of the "Manchester Guardian". The dust cover of the book quotes opinions stating that "No British correspondent knows more about Germany than Terence Prittie."

If this were true, it would reflect sadly on other British journalists, for almost every page of this book is marred by errors of fact, mis-spelt names, and other indications which show that even if he knows "more about Germany" than others he has not been able to get this knowledge down on paper.

It is scarcely surprising that Mr Prittie, who was formerly on the London Stock Exchange, feels more at home when describing the plotting of right-wing groups which decided for one reason or another that Hitler had to go, rather than the far more extensive activities over a far longer period, of the left-wing resistance groups; but this is scarcely a valid excuse for devoting only 17 pages of a 290-page book to the Communist underground. The proportions are all wrong here, and in addition these seventeen pages are marked by an even more concentrated array of falsehoods, gibes and primitive errors than the rest of this unfortunate book.

Mr Prittie's astonishing faculty for getting things wrong, even when he is simply copying from another book, can best be shown by one paragraph from page 206 of "Germans Against Hitler". Here it is:

"The Communists have since claimed – especially in the 'History of the German Anti-Fascist Resistance Movement' published by the East German Ministry of Defence in 1958 – that Nazi reprisals were on a huge scale. Allegedly, 340,000 Communists were sentenced to, in all, over 1,000,000 years' imprisonment during the first six years of the Nazi era. ... Sentences of up to six years' imprisonment were imposed for listening to foreign broadcasts ..."

And here are some comments:

1. "The Communists have **claimed** Nazi reprisals were on a huge scale." Is Mr Prittie seriously suggesting that there was not a nazi reign of terror?

2. "Allegedly, 340,000 Communists were sentenced to, in all, over 1,000,000 years imprisonment during the first six years of the nazi era." The original book states, quite clearly: "In the first five years of the Hitler dictatorship, 340,000 anti-fascists were sentenced to 1,000,000 years of imprisonment." Mr Prittie arbitrarily changes "five years" into "six years"; "anti-fascists" into "Communists"; and "1,000,000 years" into "over 1,000,000 years." Incidentally, read in context, the original text shows without a shadow of doubt that the figures refer to all nazi opponents, and not simply to Communists; details are given of the nazi persecution of Social Democrats, trade unionists, Catholics, and Protestants.

3. "Sentences of up to six years ... for listening to foreign broadcasts". The original text states quite clearly "sentences of up to eight years."

I have dealt with this one paragraph at such length to show how many primitive errors Mr Prittie is able to get into a few lines. A full listing of all his mistakes and distortions would take many pages. Here are just a few more:

"At the Moscow eighth congress of the Communist International... there was an urgent appeal for a united struggle against Fascism, and Communists were encouraged to join the International Brigade in Spain."

There was no "eighth congress" of the Comintern. Mr Prittie is obviously referring to the Seventh Congress held in 1935; since this was one year before the outbreak of the Spanish War, the reference to the International Brigade is very mysterious.

"Hitler invaded the Soviet Union in May 1941".

Only one month out, this time: the date was June 1941.

"Hans Beimler reached Republican Spain in 1938, was shot ... in Catalonia."

Hans Beimler went to Spain in 1936, and was killed in the defence of Madrid.

"The 'History of the German Anti-Fascist Resistance Movement' writes ingenuously: 'After their release from concentration camps in 1939, comrades of the Communist Party joined together again to form resistance groups against Hitler's dictatorship.' How? When? Why?" (p. 207)

Reference to the original shows that immediately following the sentence quoted, and on the same page, a full account of the formation of these resistance groups is given. Some of these details are reproduced by Mr Prittie himself on page 210.

"The official Communist 'History of the German Anti-Fascist Resistance Movement' commented, with utterly undisguised and possibly involuntary cynicism: 'As a result of the entry into the war of the Soviet Union, they (the German Communists) became convinced that it was necessary to restart their Communist work'."

Reference to the original shows that this sentence is not a comment, cynical or otherwise, made by the "official Communist History", but a direct, and clearly marked, quotation from an official nazi court indictment.

The whole question of German resistance to Hitler is one of great importance, but Mr Prittie's book does not begin to measure up to the importance of the subject. The publishers would have been better advised to entrust the task of writing such a book to someone who could at least copy down facts from other books without getting all mixed up. Mr Prittie started his journalistic career as a cricket correspondent; perhaps he should devote his talents to this field again, though readers of the "Guardian" will undoubtedly be upset when he gets the scores wrong.

GDR Women Meet in Conference

Twelve hundred women from all over the GDR met in East Berlin at the end of June to review what women have achieved in the past few years and consider what should be done next.

Discussion centred mainly round the problem of helping working women to improve their qualifications and to take on more specialised and responsible jobs.

Equality for women in all fields, equal pay for equal work etc., have long been legally guaranteed in the GDR, but speakers at the Women's Congress in Berlin stressed that even the most far-reaching legal guarantees were not enough in themselves; the main problem facing women in the GDR now is to train themselves to take full advantage of their rights.

Much has been achieved, and many training problems will be solved in the course of the coming years, now that all school children — boys and girls — will be receiving their basic training in some vocation while still at school. But there is still much to be done to help older women to do more qualified work.

At present about 3.6 million women (47 % of all workers) go out to work in the GDR, more than a million of them in industry; but about 60 % of all working women are still doing less skilled work, a considerable number have no special training at all and only about 16 % of women in industry hold senior posts.

Speakers pointed out that the proportion of women university students was still too low (just over one quarter in 1963); too many women still choose non-technical subjects for study and too few women study such subjects as textile or chemical engineering, although a high proportion of the labour force in these trades are women.

Only a tiny proportion of the many women working on the land are skilled workers trained in some special branch of farming.

Delegates suggested a number of reasons for the lack of interest in higher training shown by many married women, and even by girls. Although shopping facilities, household repair and maintenance services, housing and so on have improved considerably in recent years, married women with families must still spend too much of their spare time attending to their households.

There is accomodation for 129,000 babies in creches, nearly half of all children between 3 and 6 now attend nursery schools, there are after-school clubs in all schools and the number of all-day schools is steadily increasing, but all these facilities will have to expand further if more women are to have time and energy left over to take further training seriously.

"THE TIMES" Views the GDR

The Labour Correspondent of "The Times", London, recently toured the GDR. Here are some of his notes on things of interest which he saw:

In April this year they (the GDR, ed.) began a complete recasting of their industrial price structure. Prices of basic materials . . . were adjusted to costs. This meant a big increase in a number of materials, such as coal and electricity. One ton of soft coal, for instance, now costs industry an average 8.40 marks instead of 3.50, and for the first time the price varies according to quality . . .

On the other hand, prices of some materials such as plastics were reduced, and it is expected that as a result plastics will increasingly replace non-ferrous metals in such industries as cable-making. The new price system will be extended through the later stages of production by the end of next year, and after that prices will remain more flexible.

But consumer prices will be kept stable. This will be brought about by adjusting the state tax, used to regulate supply and demand, which is a factor added to costs and profits in the consumer price. Thus industrial prices will be governed by costs, and consumer prices by supply and demand, as the state estimates them. Where it is considered that for social reasons goods should be cheap, for instance children's wear and workers' clothing, prices are subsidized.

The new structure is important also because of developments in wage policy. The present seven-year plan, from 1964 to 1970, provides for earnings to rise by 35 per cent, but without any increase in basic rates, except to a minor degree in certain priority industries.

More than previously, pay will depend on the productivity of the factory as a whole, which could not be measured satisfactorily without a more realistic price structure. The pay of the director and executives as well as of the workers will be affected by the factory's record.

It has become official policy recently to give much greater autonomy to management at all levels down to the foreman. This seems to be partly a result of study of the methods of big industrial enterprises like I.C.I., in capitalist countries, and of experiments in Yugoslavia, and partly because a new generation of relatively competent managers is growing up.

It is recognized that the present labour shortages can be resolved only by increased mechanization and training, but there is one remaining reserve of manpower — housewives with young children . . . About 70 per cent of all women are now working and the proportion is steadily increasing. One result is, of course, that there is more than one wage-earner in a high proportion of homes. Average net family income last year was estimated at about £ 16 a week at the official exchange rate. **("Times", June 29th 1964)**

BERLIN NOTEBOOK

By John Peet

If you really want to know what things are like in East Berlin, then the place to get your information is "The Phoenix Gazette" published in Phoenix, Arizona, in the heart of the Goldwater country.

Here is an extended quote from this worthy paper for May 12th 1964; it seems a pity to shorten this magnificent flight of fancy:

"Mrs Claire Phelps ... became a dynamic little woman (she's 5-feet-2-inches tall), she studied two years of law, married a lawyer, served eight years in Arizona House of Representatives, travelled worldwide with one ear always bent to hear political rumblings.

"If she thought being defeated in the last election lessened her passion for the political way, a trip to East Germany, just completed, reaffirmed and rekindled her patriotism.

"In Germany she found 'It's like everyone is sitting on a powder keg! It's frightening... What goes on behind the wall is dreadful. In East Berlin, people look at you with a haunting, sad look — pleading. They don't speak, just look. In West Berlin, people are well dressed, children look well fed.

" 'In the east — they have nothing, children are hungry. But they pretend — they carry shopping bags with them, hustle in and out of stores. They don't buy anything for they have no money and prices are outrageous — $1,000 for a set of dishes. There are no radios, television or cars. Churches are boarded up, there are no Bibles... I've had insomnia every night since — we mustn't let ourselves be swallowed up by communism. You know — it's like we're sitting under the sword of Damocles'."

Poor Arizona; Barry Goldwater would be affliction enough for anyone, but they have Mrs Phelps yet.

* * *

Most countries try to send reasonably sensible and broad-minded men as their representatives to the conferences of UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, since as its name implies this organisation deals with subjects which demand a certain degree of knowledge and common sense.

West Germany has its fair share of sober and even renowned scientists who could make an excellent impression in this organisation; but with that brilliant degree of tactlessness which marks many of Bonn's dealings (cynics refer to this as "Prussian charm"), the West German Government has named a certain Hans-Joachim von Merkatz to lead the West German delegation to UNESCO's General Assembly in Paris in October this year.

Herr von Merkatz has some academic honours, though in a rather peculiar field: during the Second World War he headed the German-Iberian Institute in Berlin which organised nazi subversion and Fifth Column activities in the Spanish speaking countries; he was of course a Nazi Party member. But his main claim to fame is that he is always ready to make windy public declarations supporting the most right-wing reactionary policies and positions. Recently, for instance, he claimed that the West German constitution contained no clauses preventing the reintroduction of a monarchy in Germany, and suggested that this would be a good idea. And here are a few more of his brighter thoughts:

"We feel that the practice of keeping the so-called war criminals in prison is unjust because there is no real basis for it. We are at one with men like Mannstein, Kesselring, and all those imprisoned in Landsberg and Werl" (Parliamentary speech, September 17th 1952).

"We have gambled with the great inheritance of our forefathers, and we have lost. Now we must win back what Bismarck and others won." (February 24th 1955).

"Hold fast to the traditions of your order", Merkatz said, addressing Wehrmacht officers who were awarded the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross by Hitler. "It is no faded distinction, you are regarded as an elite, as the aristocracy of our people. Responsible people today are full of respect for the achievements which stand to your credit; they regard you as exemplars" (October 17th 1961).

"We stand on Franco's side. The great moral efforts of Spain must be greeted with satisfaction. West German democracy and Spanish authoritarianism are not opposites; they complement each other" (Speech in Madrid, June 24th 1962).

A few speeches like these in UNESCO would be just the job.

* * *

As in other countries, old soldiers fade away in West Germany too, and gradually Hitler's generals who have built up the West German Bundeswehr over the past eight years are being extruded at the top and going out to grass on their ill-earned pensions. This is simply a question of age; the war ended nearly twenty years ago, and most of the men whom Hitler promoted to general are now getting too old for the job.

But does this mean that the men now moving into the top command posts have less blood-thirsty records? The answer given by the Bundeswehr staff lists is a clear negative. Hitler's generals may go, but his colonels and majors are taking over. A recent analysis shows that an increasing number of top command posts are going to field officers who held key posts in the nazi parachute troops; this too is logical. The nature of an extremely agile military force like the paratroops demands that the officers be young and athletic too; so there are still plenty of Hitler's paratroop colonels around young enough to soldier on for many years in the West German Bundeswehr. At least ten such colonels are now reaching top rank in the Bonn army. Here are two particularly interesting specimens:

Colonel Harry Hermann has just taken over as commander of the West German paratroop training school. He commanded Hitler's 9th paratroop division in the closing stages of the war; he was sentenced to 25 years imprisonment by a Soviet court for war crimes; he was released in 1955; since 1957 he has been training West Germany's new paratroops.

His colleague **Colonel Gerhard Schirmer** is today commander of the air group of the 2nd Corps of the Bundeswehr. His history is remarkably similar to Hermann's: regimental paratroop commander on the eastern front; 25-year sentence for war crimes; premature release; reintegration and a new career in the Bundeswehr.

* * *

Because of holiday arrangements, this will be the only issue of GERMAN REPORT for this month. The next issue will appear in early August.

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